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Ministry of Forests and Range

B.C. FIREFIGHTERS FLY TO THE YUKON

VICTORIA – British Columbia has sent 44 forest fire fighters, pilots and specialists to the Yukon to help the territory prepare for an expected outbreak of lightning-caused wildfires, announced Rich Coleman, Minister of Forests and Range.

"The Yukon is currently experiencing dry, volatile conditions with high fire potential," said Coleman. "There is a concern about lightning predicted for later this week, so we are pleased to be able to provide assistance."

B.C. crews arrived in Whitehorse yesterday for up to 19 days. Staff include 12 three-person initial attack crews, who are dispatched to new or smaller fires, and one tanker group, of six people and five aircraft.

Additional crews and equipment have also been deployed to Quebec this week, bringing the total number of British Columbia resources in that province to 339 staff and four helicopters. Crews and fire management specialists were deployed to Roberval and Val D'or areas on June 17 and June 19.

The fire danger rating in B.C. is currently low to moderate, with a seasonal warming and drying trend. Sufficient resources will remain in B.C. should fire activity increase. Deployed crews may be recalled at any time should conditions worsen.

All deployments are co-ordinated through the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC). Costs of the deployment are being paid by the requesting provinces.

The public reports nearly half of all wildfires in B.C. Please continue to report smoke and flames by calling toll-free 1-800-663-5555 or *5555 on most cellular networks.

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Note to media:
Government of Yukon, wildfire management website: www.community.gov.yk.ca/firemanagement/;
Quebec Society for the Prevention of Wildfire website: www.sopfeu.qc.ca

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